

THE GLOBE AND MAIL SE
HD
BY
WC
PD
SN
SC
ED
PG
LA
CY
LP

News

Trudeau must do more for First Nations people

By PAMELA PALMATER

757 words

26 October 2019

The Globe and Mail

GLOB

Ontario

O7

English

©2019 The Globe and Mail Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Mi'kmaw lawyer and holds the position of professor and chair in Indigenous governance at Ryerson University in Toronto. This federal election was decided by the fear of another Conservative government so soon after their decade-long regime.

Justin Trudeau's Liberal Party has been reduced to a minority government; this is a strong message from Canadians and First Nations that the Liberals have some making up to do for all of their broken promises.

TD

If the Liberals want their minority government to survive any length of time, they would do well to remember that their election victory does not equate to a blank cheque to build pipelines in the face of climate change, nor does it mean genocide.

(as the inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls ruled it) against female Indigenous peoples can continue as it is. If the worldwide protests for climate action and the increasing discontent with human-rights-violating governments is not enough to get Mr. Trudeau's attention, one hopes that this minority election result will.

Mr. Trudeau had promised to repeal former prime minister Stephen Harper's legislative suite imposed on First Nations; he promised to conduct a comprehensive review of federal laws for compliance with the Section 35 Aboriginal and treaty rights; he promised to completely remove the cap on funding for First Nations social programs; and he promised to

address the water crisis on reserves – none of which he completed in his first term.

Mr. Trudeau will have to present an entirely different face this time around and show some humility in the wake of these election results. The Prime Minister should take full accountability for his mistakes and make as sincere effort to fulfill the promises from his first mandate to First Nations.

He will have to change his dismissive attitude toward chiefs who oppose the pipelines and his refusal to deal with First Nations only through the Assembly of First Nations. He must now demonstrate that he is sincere and dedicated to building a true nation-to-nation relationship.

What is very significant about this election is that the Liberals did not win any seats in Alberta and Saskatchewan, which means that those ridings where First Nations held the swing vote also did not vote Liberal.

Any party that thinks that First Nations can be ignored fails to understand that everything has changed since the Idle No More movement this decade. Many Canadians joined forces with First Nations during Idle No More to protest concerns about the horrific treatment of First Nations, but also the erosion of core principles of democracy and freedom for Canadians.

Since that time, the partnership between First Nations and non-government organizations advocating for human rights, anti-poverty, women's rights, children's rights, climate action, democracy and social justice has strengthened. First Nations continue to win many of their court cases on rights, land claims and other matters, and they have the attention of United Nations treaty bodies, along with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, on the continuing genocide in Canada. Incremental change will not cut it this time around.

This sea change will require that Mr. Trudeau seriously consider the priorities of the NDP and Bloc Québécois.

It is clear that clean drinking water on reserves must be a priority, alongside addressing the housing crisis, as well as health and education. There are some major files that Mr. Trudeau will have to address directly or risk a very short-lived government.

First, the Liberals must face head-on the finding of genocide from the report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. That means an urgent, national plan of action, likely done in partnership with the Inter-American Commission or one of the UN treaty bodies, to work toward a transitional justice plan to end genocide in Canada. He should also accept the decision of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, and end racial discrimination against First Nations children in foster care. These are issues of life and death for First Nations women and children.

Second, climate change and its disproportional impact on First Nations is also a national emergency. While it may be difficult, challenging and even painful, Mr. Trudeau's Liberals have to realize that everything has to change if we are to ensure a future for all of us. Pipelines are part of the dying fossil fuel industry that offers no future for Canadians or the planet. Many other countries worldwide have switched to renewable, green energy and this is the only path that leads to an inhabitable planet for our future generations.

Now more than ever, Mr. Trudeau needs to actively seek out the advice, guidance and expertise of those typically excluded or avoided in government decision-making circles. We will only get through the rough patch ahead of impending climate disaster and genocide if Canada makes a conscious choice to truly and meaningfully engage with Canadians and First Nations. Mr. Trudeau must embrace all the uncertainty and discomfort that comes with this urgently needed change.

CO

rysnn : Ryerson University

NS

gprr : Politics/International Relations | gethm : Ethnic Minorities | gcivds : Civil Unrest | gcat : Political/General News | gppl : Domestic Politics | gcns : National/Public Security | gcom : Society/Community | grisk : Risk News | gsoc : Social Issues

RE

cana : Canada | namz : North America

PUB

The Globe and Mail Inc.

AN

Document GLOB000020191026efaq00015

Search Summary

Text	"climate action"
Date	20191001 to 20231231
Source	The Globe and Mail - All sources
Author	All Authors
Company	All Companies
Subject	All Subjects
Industry	All Industries
Region	All Regions
Language	All Languages
Results Found	870
Timestamp	8 August 2023 1:46 PM